

THE GREAT EXHIBITION,

SUGGESTIVE AND ANTICIPATIVE.

BY THE

REV: JOHN CUMMING, D.D.,

MINISTER OF THE NATIONAL SCOTCH CHURCH, CROWN COURT,
COVENT GARDEN.

AUTHOR OF "VOICES OF THE DAY," "VOICES OF THE NIGHT,"
"CHRIST RECEIVING SINNERS," ETC., ETC.

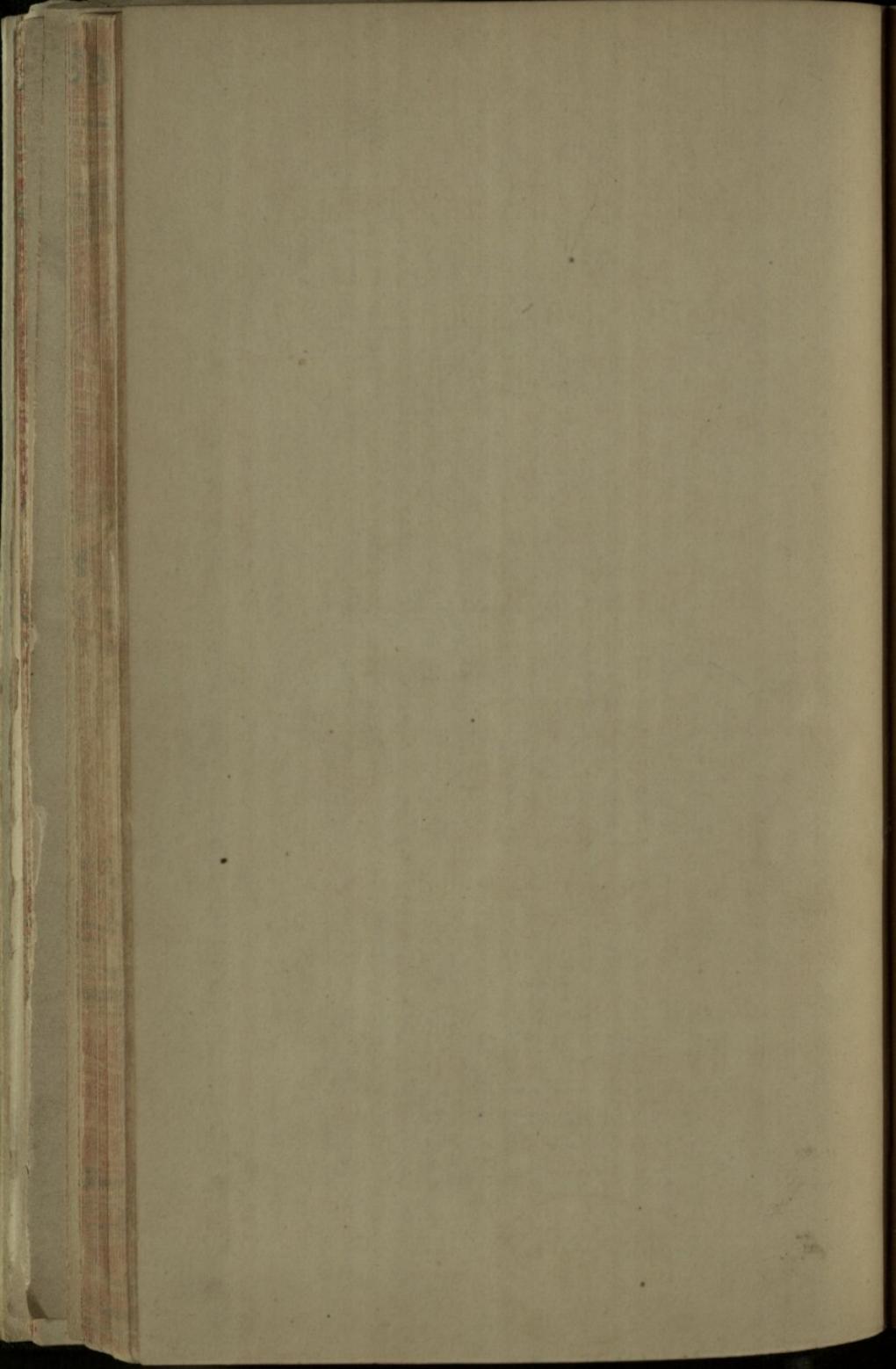
Second Thousand.

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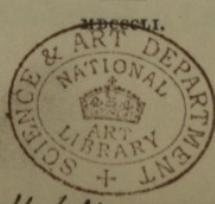
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CHAPTER I.

SUGGESTIVE.

"God be merciful unto us, and bless us ; and cause his face to shine upon us ; that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations."—PSALM lxvii. 1, 2.

It seems to one, on looking at the blessing which Moses was commanded to pronounce upon the children of Israel, as if an echo of that blessing were sounding in the ears of David, when he prayed in this beautiful psalm that what the priest pronounced in words might become actual in the experience of all Israel. The blessing that Aaron was commanded to pronounce upon the children of Israel was on this wise—"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee : the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee : the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." David, catching up the words, prays that the blessing as pronounced by the priest of old may actually descend upon all the children of Israel. And then, the apostle, as if the same strain ran like a beautiful chord through the Old and New Testament dispensations, and were to his heart audible in

them all, takes it up, and throws it into the shape of thanksgiving: “Blessed be the Lord God, who blessed us;” as if he had said, “By the lips of Aaron, and in answer to the prayer for the blessing by the lips of David. Now, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.”

It is plain, on looking into the words of this beautiful psalm, that, without alluding to its national reference, the great idea which the Psalmist teaches us in his prayer is, that we must be blessed ourselves before we can be blessings to others; that, before all the earth shall know God’s way, and all the nations shall see His saving health, there must descend upon us the knowledge of that way in the first place, and then the influence of that actual, and pledged, and promised blessing will follow in the next place. We are the instrument,—“God bless *us*;” the end is not that ours may be a monopoly of the blessing, but that all nations may know God’s way, and that all the earth may reflect God’s saving health. It is one of the most precious traits in the Gospel of Christ, that nowhere is the conversion of the individual regarded as the ultimate thing. The conversion of the individual is only an intermediate link in that grand chain that

connects the purpose of God in his own bosom with the embodiment of that purpose in the glory and happiness and joy of all the ends of the earth.

The terms that are here employed it may be proper briefly to explain. First of all, he prays for mercy :—“God be merciful unto us.” Goodness is love in its aspect towards the unfallen. God is good to angels. Mercy is love in its aspect towards the fallen and the guilty. Goodness is the pure reflected light. Mercy is one of the rays of that light divided and refracted in Christ into its constituent beams. We, as sinners, conscious that we are so, ask very properly for mercy. Not only do we pray, “Be merciful unto us,” but also, “bless us.” By nature, we are under a curse; by grace, we are placed under a blessing. It is not required that we should do a great crime to come under God’s curse; we are born so. We are born in exile,—“children of wrath,” says the apostle, “even as others.” And what we pray for is, that the wrath may be removed; and the blessing occupy its place, and by Christ, through whom alone it can come. We pray, too, that his face may “shine upon us;” that we may not only have his blessing, but know it; that we may not only be forgiven in his mercy, but that the reflected light of that

forgiveness may be upon our character, just as the glory of God, when Moses came down from the mount, was upon his face ; that the whole world may take notice of us, that we have been in communion and in contact with Jesus.

Now, in viewing at length the words which I have selected for meditation, I wish to show the great result, and the good result, that would accrue, if, in all the shapes, departments, and varieties of our organisation as a nation, God were at this moment richly to bless us, and have mercy upon us ; that the representatives of all the nations of the earth now met and assembled together might, through us as the medium, see God's grace, and know His saving health. A Pentecost of tongues is here, and no less a Pentecostal variety of costumes ; oh ! that there may also be a repetition of Pentecostal grace and Pentecostal power !

Let us view the various constituent sections into which our country is divided, and see what would be the result of God's blessing and mercy resting far more deeply and largely upon each.

First, I would say, our prayers should be that God would be merciful to us as *Individuals*, and cause his face to shine upon us, and bless us. In other words, we should pray, that each of us may feel a far deeper

and more enthusiastic interest in real, scriptural, personal Christianity. Our first prayer should be, that each of us may ask with yet deeper anxiety, "What must I do to be saved?" and that none of us may leave the question till we have personally and practically felt that we have leaned upon the Saviour, and are justified and accepted freely through his blood. It is a prayer that none of us may be satisfied with that baptism which bathes the brow, but only with that inner baptism which regenerates and renews the heart. Our first cry should be for personal religion; our next, that God's way may be known upon earth, and his saving health among all nations. Therefore, let each individual say, "God be merciful unto me, and bless me, and cause his face to shine upon me." But I will not say "me," for it is one of the most beautiful laws of the Gospel, that God will not let men pray for themselves alone; he will not let us say, "My Father," lest self should creep into our prayers like a worm into a bud, and gnaw out the life which is in them: he teaches us to say, "Our Father," so that no man can ask a blessing for himself, without asking one for all mankind; and therefore we say, "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine

upon us; that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations."

The second section of our community on which we should pray for a blessing is our *families*. I believe the family is the most important group in the whole of our country. The State is the creation of man: legislators can manage it. The Church is the conventionalism of ministers; and ecclesiastics can govern it. But the family is that holy nook, that quiet, holy spot in society, into which no legislators can intrude, and which no ecclesiastic, either as confessor or director, may dare, at his peril, to enter. Wherever there is a pure Christian home, there there is a spring that feeds and refreshes the nation, which is only an aggregate of similar homes. What is our country? A national home. What is each little family? A little country. It is only when the springs are pure, that the whole country becomes pure. The home, therefore, should be a nursery of Christians, a missionary settlement, whose chief missionary is the mother, and where prayer and praise should be as the ascending morning and evening incense. And when foreigners, who believe that in that word "home" there is a music even in the very utterance, and a significance in the thing itself which they have not been

able adequately to decipher—ask why it is so ? oh ! let them find that our home is so bright and so pure, because simple Protestant Christianity has made it so.

Let us pray, in the next place, that God will be merciful, not only to our homes, and bless them, and cause his face to shine upon them ; but that he will be merciful to our *Congregations*, and cause his face to shine upon them ; that thus his way may be known upon earth, his saving health among all nations. Were God to pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon our congregations, what love would nestle in every heart ! what devotion would rush, like an electric current, from pew to pew, charging every spirit with a fervour to which the pomp and splendour of a miserable Romish ritual is altogether strange ! We should gather together in the house of God, as if to be fed with manna ; and we should feel that, if its walls were clay, and its pews were undressed fir—yet truly this is the house of God, truly this is the gate of heaven ! The great want in our congregations is, not that we should be constructed on the model of some churches in the West, that have been the subject of so much popular animadversion. No rood-screens, however beautifully worked ; no crucifixes, however artistically made ; no

collection of timber, and stone, and brass, and gold, and silver, can ever meet the deep want which is in the poorest sinner's heart, tell him how he is to be saved, or make him happy in the enjoyment of such salvation. There is something in the heart of man that makes him laugh at all that. It is not purity of architecture or music, but the living bread that cometh down from heaven, that feeds the soul. And oh! that we could only show to many of these foreigners that all the splendour of their music in the Madeleine, in Notre Dame, in St. Gudule's, or in St. Peter's,—that all that gorgeous worship is only the pomp and splendour of her who is seated on the seven hills, and in whose hand is a cup full of abominations—whose end is destruction; that the true beauty of the Church of Christ is not a beauty that a painter's brush can create, or that an architect's genius can devise, or a mason's trowel can build, but an inner beauty—a moral, and therefore a true beauty, lasting and inviolable. “The king's daughter is all glorious within;” and that beauty must come from the Creator of all true beauty, the great Architect of heaven and of earth,—the Lord Jesus Christ. Then, brethren, let us pray that God will be merciful to our congregations, and bless them; and cause

his face to shine upon them; that thus his way may be known upon earth, his saving health among all nations.

But we will not be satisfied with praying for our congregations only, we will thus pray for the whole *Church* of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a sad spectacle does it often present! what quarrels! what disputes! I would to God that the Roman Catholic attacks upon us had less substance in them. I would to God that we could say that we were less divided and split; for we are truly divided and split among ourselves, where no real ground of division exists. Souls are dying, and the physicians in the hospital are quarrelling about their respective diplomas. The capital is in the hands of the foe; and the regiments are turning their naked swords upon each other. The Pope and the Cardinal are warming their hands at our fires, building their cathedrals out of our temples, and constructing strongholds out of our disputes and our divisions. Ten thousand voices are crying from the depths of a degraded population, "What must we do to be saved?" And ministers of the Gospel, and Bishops, are settling the Gorham controversy, or adjusting ingeniously their surplices or silk gowns. Is there not need that God should be merciful to the Church,

and bless it, and cause His face to shine upon it, that such an offence should not be seen by the nations of the earth now around us? Were the Holy Ghost thus to descend upon us; were this psalm, which is now prayer, to become indeed performance, and we to be evidence alike of its truth and its power, what glorious effects would take place! Some excellent men can never hear of a revival of religion in the Church without entertaining some idea of extravagance, fanaticism, or eccentricity of conduct. We mean by it no such thing. The descent of the Holy Spirit of God will not make one regard the urbanities of life less, or be the least discourteous, or disloyal, or indulge in the least extravagance. The second Pentecost will come, not in the bursting thunder and in the blazing fire, but like the sweet spring descending upon the earth, quietly, effectually; bringing out bud, and blossom, and fruit, and flower, and tree. The Holy Spirit is not the lion or the tiger, but the dove. The voice of Jesus is not the thunder of Sinai, but the still small voice. And whenever that Spirit shall come down upon us, and this blessing shall come to us all, there will be no upsetting of duties, no rupture of earthly relationships. The descent of the Spirit of God will not stop one single railway,

except, it may be, on Sunday, nor put an end to one single daily newspaper, nor shut one shop, nor make a tradesman less obliging, nor a merchant less anxious to pre-occupy the market. It will interfere with nothing in itself essential to the constitution and the existence of society. The grace of God is not licence to leave society, but power to go into it, and transform it. The grace of God sends its subjects into every sphere into which man should enter; and in that sphere, to let their light so shine, that others, seeing their good works, may glorify their Father which is in heaven. And were that Spirit to descend upon us all, and a sublime and lofty Christian character to be reflected from all our lives, then would the strangers from the ends of the earth see that the highest dignity of the man cannot exist, unless there be a basis for it in the grandeur and the glory of the saint. Were this blessing to descend upon us all, along the little by-paths of individual life sweet streamlets would perpetually flow; along the broad and high roads of public life great rivers would run; and all would blend in one grand stream,—one broad and deep Christian river from the Fountain of life, which would be traced, not by stormy waves, not by cataracts and eddies, but by a belt of verdure and of beauty along

its channel and on its banks, and the faithfulness with which it reflected the spires and the homes of villages, and the palaces and towers of great and illustrious capitals. The feeling would be deep, the change would be real, the transformation would be complete ; but noise, violence, extravagance, fanaticism, would be far greater strangers to it than to the world itself. Thus we will pray that God will be merciful to the whole Church, and bless her; and cause his face to shine upon her.

In the next place, we should pray that God will be merciful to, and bless our *Universities*; that thus God's way may be known upon earth, and his saving health among all nations. I fear we often forget this. In Scotland, I know I never heard a prayer in the congregation which did not include the universities of our country. It is often forgotten here. Yet what, alas ! have been the teeming fountains of superstition lately ? and where is there any other element of gigantic power to be compared with some of these great schools of learning ? We pray for their inspiration, not ruin. Who does not feel in the present day, that there never was more needed a highly educated and instructed ministry ? The result which one dreads, is that the pulpit will languish behind the age. Why does a bookseller tell you that

the drug in his warehouse is a sermon ? Because the parliament, and the press, and the other professions, are monopolizing talent; and some are found thinking that because the Spirit of God, and a change of heart, are essential to a true ministry, that, therefore, there need not be a highly educated and instructed ministry. The apostles were some of them fishermen ; yet Luke the Evangelist was a most excellent scholar. The Gospel of Luke is written in the most classical Greek. St. Paul was a master spirit of his day, accomplished in the learning of his own country, and of other countries. However, let us also remember that no knowledge of the classics, no acquaintance with science, no lofty distinction in mathematics, no thorough knowledge of all secular subjects, is alone a qualification, or even the main qualification, for being a minister of the Gospel. The Holy Spirit alone can create a minister. If there be mere secular knowledge taught in our universities, and no Christianity, and no prayer, then the result will take place which has occurred in Germany, that a Hindoo, a Socinian, a Roman Catholic, may occupy a chair in any one of the universities ; and in 1848, German cities were the foci of revolution, of anarchy, and of disloyalty. When Christianity is expelled from the universities of a country, and their chairs

are not filled by religious men, we shall soon find that phenomena will become the gods of the place, mathematics the articles of faith, and distorted science its creed. So long as there is no religion taught in our universities, nor living religious and Christian men to teach it, so long our students will see indeed the successive links of that great chain a few of which are in the Crystal Palace, and they will admire the connection of each link with its neighbour; but, unless they get the light of God, they will not see that the noble chain has the staple that holds it, fixed to the throne of God himself. There must, then, not only be the secular knowledge, which is power, but there must be Christian knowledge, which is life and peace. Let us by all means learn the wisdom of Solomon; but let us learn, first and chiefest, the wisdom of Christ. Do not let us go through Solomon to Christ—through science to Christianity; but through Christ to Solomon—through Christianity to science. Both are Divine—the knowledge of Solomon, and the knowledge of Christ—both are necessary, both should be taught; but what we protest against is, the separation and the division of the one from the other. I do hope that no law will pass, as far as our National colleges are concerned, rendering it possible for an

infidel or a tractarian to teach languages, literature, or science in them: for, commit science or literature to the hands of the infidel, and theological chairs will be of no avail in counteracting the mischief that is done.

In the next place, let us pray that God will be merciful unto, and bless, and cause His face to shine upon the very humblest schools in our land, wherever they are, and by whatever name they are known. In these schools seek first the kingdom of God. A school is either a spring that will refresh and invigorate, or it is the salt water that will destroy the very roots of our social prosperity and happiness. I believe, that the infant school, which is made by some a plaything, is at least as important as one of our great colleges. The circumnavigator of the globe is not so much influenced by what he has seen and heard, as the ragged boy by his teacher's early and impressive lessons. The words that are spoken in the family to children, or in a school by a teacher, are like words spoken in a whispering-gallery, or like a voice in the gorges of the mountains—they will be repeated for years to come in reverberations; and the teacher's first lesson will see itself re-produced when the child is covered with grey hairs, and with one foot in and the other outside the grave. If it be a solemn thing to

preach, it is a solemn thing to teach. If the sanctuary be a place where great responsibilities are, the school is not less so. Out of that ragged school of ours in Wild Street, which I had the pleasure of examining the other night, that little ragged boy may come, as from another Corsica, to scourge the nations; or he may emerge from that little nook another Howard, to leave benedictions on the remotest places of the earth. I may truly speak of our own parochial schools in Scotland, as having, at the least expense, done the greatest good of any schools upon earth. And I tell those who may belong to our sister country, England, that our humble parochial schools, which the reformed ministers in the sixteenth century starved themselves in order to endow—I appeal to Europe, I appeal to America, I appeal to the ends of the earth—have produced as able, upright, and honourable men as both the universities of England. And I wish some of our legislators—I speak it in no bitterness, but in love—before they try to drive Christianity out of our parochial schools, would exert themselves in driving Puseyism from one of their own universities in England. We may depend upon it, the maintenance of Christian teachers in our schools is a most vital thing. Let us then pray that on

our schools, and on our universities, God's blessing may descend; and that He will be merciful to these, and cause His face to shine upon these; that His way may be known upon earth, His saving health among all nations.

I would next say, that we ought to pray this prayer, and pray it fervently: that on the *Press* of our country God's blessing and mercy may descend; that His saving health may thus be known among all nations. I believe the most gigantic power in our country is the public press. I believe, that if an Apostle were living, he would try to wield it for his Master's glory, and for the winning of precious souls. Only I fear, that not a few take their articles of faith from the newspaper, more than from the word of God itself; and others, who used to pride themselves of old upon splendid furniture, now pride themselves upon newspaper reputation and renown. It must be added, that, with the exception of the Sunday newspaper press, which indulges in the violation of the fourth commandment, and which glories in its shame by writing its sin upon its title-page, there is not so noble a press in any part of the world as there is in our own land; and when I add, that that press is regarded by foreigners, much more than by us, as the reflection of what our morals and our religion are,

and of what our whole character is, how important is it to pray, that God will be pleased to make every editor of a newspaper a Christian, and every writer in a newspaper a Christian! We do not want religious newspapers in the sense of their containing theological discussions; but we want secular newspapers conducted upon Christian principles. It is one of the great mistakes of the age, that politics and literature should appear here, and religion there. They ought never to be separated. The one ought to sustain the other. The life and the nutriment of the first should be the last. Religion should give strength and beauty to literature. If foreigners then see that we have newspapers, as I hope they will, not dependent upon vicious tastes,—upon silly romances,—upon idle gossip,—upon stories about probable revolutions; but upon their high moral tone,—upon their pure and chaste writing,—upon their manly and vigorous sentiments,—upon the Christian principle that runs through them: then they will believe that our Protestant religion is not a dead thing, not an inoperative thing. They will see it, I trust, ruling in our families, the glory of them; shining in our universities, the beauty of them; and in the columns of the newspaper press, giving tone, and character, and force, and excel-

lence to them also. Let us then pray—why should we not pray?—that on the press of our country there may descend a Christian influence. It is a great fact, that wherever the press exists, it has power; and wherever there is great power, let us pray that there may be also great grace to regulate it. Who can tell the result if the press were to rise to a giant's power, but have infidel or atheistic hearts and hands to wield it? Let us, therefore, pray that, in all its departments, the powerful press of this country may be blessed.

Let us pray, in the next place, for our *Army* and *Navy*, that a blessing may descend on them; for each is also mighty for good or for evil, at home and abroad. It is, however, a most precious fact, that, much as the army has been abused by some who know nothing about the matter, and much as the navy has been spoken against by others, in no profession upon earth is there a greater number of spiritual and devoted Christians than in both the army and navy. Just take up a Report of a religious society, and you will see colonels, and admirals, and generals, and captains of the Royal Navy without number. Literally and truly, there is, I think, as great a number of Christian men in these two professions as in any other. And even in the Word of God itself, it is Christian soldiers who

have been the first selected as testimonies of what Christianity can do. And now, if there were worship on the quarterdeck every day, at least on every Sunday, and if every barracks only became a larger home, wherein to love, and praise, and magnify God were daily duty, do you think that the soldier's hand would grasp the sword less firmly, because the grace of God was in the soldier's heart ? All history says, that wherever there has been the highest heroism, there has there been not only loyalty, but love, and truth, and worship toward God.

In the next place, we should pray that the spirit of the Gospel may descend on a place where there is not less need of it,—on the Houses of Parliament. Let us pray, that on that great House God will be merciful, and bless it; and cause His face to shine upon it; that thus His way may be known upon earth, His saving health among all nations. Foreigners will be crowding into our Parliament, and they will judge—I do not say that they should so judge, I am only speaking of facts—by the temper, the spirit, the tone, and the character of our Parliamentary Debates, what sort of people we Protestants are. I rejoice to know that there have been more noble and Protestant speeches — there is one especially I might

mention—lately in that House than have been delivered for 200 years. The echo of such speeches will roll round the world, and let the nations know that the religion we love in our hearts, and pray in our closets, we are not ashamed to avow in the high places of the land. But whilst this is true, there is much on the other hand to deplore. How frequently is a sneer at real religion couched in a laugh at parties in Exeter Hall! What merriment is made if some great professor has actually, or is supposed to have, committed some inconsistency! An Apostle said, “We tell you of these things weeping;” but they say, “We tell you of these things rejoicing.” Now, were there a greater Christian feeling in our senators, time would not be wasted in personal disputes ; party would not try to trip up party, and then the party tripped up to return the compliment ;—then men would not ask what their constituents would think, or what newspapers would say, but what conscience, what God has distinctly said ; and their speeches, pervaded by such a character, would show that, whilst the Romish religion gives outward colour to everything, and nothing more, our Bible religion actuates all minds, pervades all hearts, colours all our social organization, and that it is believed by our people to be our strength and our defence.

And shall we not pray that the two verses of this psalm may be more and more realised in the character of her who sways the mighty sceptre of this mighty realm; and that that beautiful personal character which shines through the Royal purple, and is accompanied by gems greater and more precious than those that are in her diadem, may be increased in splendour, in beauty, and in influence more and more; that the nations of the earth may see that Protestant Christianity not only creates the most loyal subjects, but gives to those loyal subjects the noblest monarch that ever sat upon a throne, or graced a diadem? Our interest is involved in the character of those that are above us; because wherever lofty place is, there there is great influence; and it is a just wish that those who occupy the high places of the land should be frequently and fervently prayed for by those that are under them. It is a very remarkable distinction, but a very true one, that while grace always ascends, beginning at the very base of the pyramid, and ascending to the very apex; influence always descends. Grace begins at the base, and culminates in the Queen upon the throne; but influence begins at the throne, and descends down to the base. And how important it is that in those who are in high places there should be exhibited

lofty Christian character; that the nations of the earth might see from afar that our religion not only makes the masses cohere, as by a cement, but that it also ascends to the very loftiest pinnacles of the land, and is the glory and the beauty there.

Having thus noticed all these departments in our land, let me state what is the summary and substance of this prayer;—it is, in fact, that we may be good, and not be satisfied simply with doing good; that God's way may be known upon earth, His saving health among all nations. Not that we may organize missionary societies, not that we may preach and speak, is our prayer, but that God will be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us; that His way may be known upon earth. It is here assumed that the instant a man is made a Christian, his life is beneficially operative and influential. I need not tell you that there are just two influences that men exert—the voluntary and designed influence, which may proceed from twenty different motives; and secondly, the involuntary or insensible influence, which goes forth from every look and action, as really as the blood circulates from every pulse of the heart. Now, this last influence is that which is alluded to here. What we purposely do is

not so effective as what we unconsciously do. What we undertake to do may be misconstrued as proceeding from a wrong motive; but what we undesignedly do is regarded as the real exponent of our character. I believe that what we are is far more important than what we do. What we are is far more influential in the face of mankind than what we attempt. Then, to be Christians first, is the greatest contribution we can make to the Missionary Society. Our sovereign is a poor contribution; our donation, when most munificent, is paltry; but the contribution of our own personal influence has power, has action. It is true that our insensible influence, as I have ventured to speak of it, does not make speeches; it does not let the left hand know what the right hand does—there is no bustle or stir about it; but it is not the less strong or the less operative on that account. In fact, the most powerful forces are the most silent, and the least powerful forces are the most noisy. We speak of the thunder and the lightning being powerful. So they are; but there is a power mightier still. Gravitation holds the orbs of the sky, and the atoms of the earth, all in their places; and if that mysterious power were to relax its grasp, the orbs of the sky, and the atoms of the earth, would explode, and fly asunder, and

there would be universal ruin; yet it is not heard. The thunder and the lightning are powerful, but there is another thing mightier still:—the light from heaven,—that light that comes down from the sun, traversing an enormous distance in a few seconds, that falls so gently on the infant's eye that it does not in the least disturb its delicate and exquisite organization; and yet it has such power that it clothes the earth with flower, and fruit.

The thunder-shower we think powerful, but the silent dew that falls in the night softly and inaudibly is far more powerful; for it saturates, yet does not injure, the soil on which it falls. So, our personal character is far more influential and aggressive, though it be more silent and inobtrusive, than what we attempt or designedly do. The most eloquent discourse from a person that you know to be a bad man will have very little effect. What strikes in a sermon is the beating of the heart, audible in the words, as if the echoes of its beats. It is the splendour of a true soul shining in the life, that is the most effective preaching of all. Christianity in the heart is far more effective than the most eloquent words that ever dropped from the lips. If we take our blessed Lord's own character, we shall find that the influence of Jesus arose not only from

what He said, but far more from what He was. If it be true, "Never man spake like this man;" therefore were the effects so great; it was no less true, "Never man lived like this man;" therefore was His influence so great. They that came fell at His feet. What manner of man, they might have asked, is this, that the winds of passion and the waves of prejudice obey? It was Christ, not Christianity, that made so deep an impression on Jerusalem. It was the Author, as much as His work, that had such weight in the transformation of character. And therefore, if we wish to promote the greatest moral good upon those dwellers in the distant parts of the earth who are here present, let us be good, and we shall do good. Be light, and you need not give yourselves any trouble about being luminous. If you are lights, you must be luminous. Be the salt of the earth, and you need not trouble yourselves about preserving those who are about you. If you are salt, your very nature is to communicate savour. Be Christians, and your Christian character will influence those who are around you. Do not suppose it is possible for you to be negatives. There is no such thing as a personal negative upon earth. Every man is operative or aggressive. If you wish not to be blots, you must be bless-

ings, for blanks you never can be. There is no blank in society; each man in this city is either a blot or a blessing. Choose you between these two which you will be. How important it is that we should pray, "God be merciful unto us, and bless us"! Reality cannot long be counterfeited. I do not believe it is possible for a man to play the hypocrite for any length of time. There is ever something in the different shadows that sweep across his face,—some management that appears, as he tries to be what he is not,—some decided look,—that tell you all is not right within, as surely as, when the hands of a timepiece go unsteadily, you know that there is something wrong in the machinery within. The hypocrisy will come out, and you will read it upon his face, and it is impossible to conceal it. But, on the other hand, be a Christian, and it will tell; be a child of God, and it will be influential. You may hide the sun, the moon, and the stars, but Christian character you cannot. And if we be Christians, then these dwellers from Mesopotamia, and Crete, and from Judæa, and from Phrygia, and all the ends of the earth, may learn what Christianity is, not from our Bibles, which they will not open, but from those "living epistles" which they must meet in the Crystal Palace, which they must see be-

hind our counters, and in our Parliament, and amongst our professional men ; and they will be constrained to see what Protestantism is, by the living Bibles which are its exponents.

I have spoken now of insensible influence. I must add a few words, for it is very important, not upon active or designed influence, but upon removing obstructions to such true and holy influence. I will assume that every one who reads this is a true Christian ; yet there are many obstructions that will keep our character from telling as it ought to do, and which we may remove.

First, at the present crisis, be courteous. Go into France, and the courtesy with which a Frenchman will answer you, when you ask him the way to a place, and the trouble he will put himself to to show it you, is such as at once makes you prepossessed in favour of the national character. Now, when a poor Frenchman asks you what is the way to such a place, put yourselves to a little trouble to assist him. Be courteous; it is a Christian maxim. And how do you know that the courtesy you show to the stranger may not lead him to inquire what is beneath that courtesy; and that he may find that it is not the sham of French conventionalism, but the truth of Christian love which bids us, "Be courteous" ?

In the next place, let our tradesmen and dealers be just. I know you will be so if you be Christians; but do not have the appearance of being otherwise. Do not ask, as some do, double what they mean to take. Do not say, We must try to make the most of this harvest of foreigners; but deal with them just as you would deal with the rest of your fellows. The grace of God teaches us to live justly, and soberly, and righteously, and godly.

And, in the next place, show them all hospitality. You say, that is a very poor maxim to give from the pulpit. It never can be wrong to give from the pulpit what the Spirit has given in the Gospel. Hospitality is a Christian virtue; and who knows not, that if you invite them to your homes, you will not only be doing good in other respects, but you may entertain angels unawares? What they see in your homes may be blessed to them.

In the next place, do not turn into ridicule whatever strange manners and customs you meet with. There is nothing in the turban of the Mahomedan that is not at least as graceful as the appendage that takes its place with us. It is just as philosophical to eat from a carpet as to eat off a table. And that man is very weak who turns into ridicule all customs that are not reflexions of his own. Reverence

human nature under all its forms ; for it still bears evidences, in its broken and wasted ruins, that it bore the image of God, and may bear it again.

In the next place, do not enter into controversy with foreigners, about their respective forms of government. If you speak to a Mahomedan, do not tell him about the bad government of the Sultan. If you meet an American, although we are quite satisfied that it is so, do not tell him how much superior our monarchy is to his republic. We have a republic, crowned by a noble Queen ; they have a republic, presided over by a temporary President. Both have advantages. A monarchy may be compared to a ship with all her sails set, as with beautiful figure she sweeps across the seas; but if she chance to strike upon some hidden rock, down she goes, and at once disappears. A republic is like a raft ; your feet may be always in the water, but it always keeps afloat. A large and liberal mind will see, that if they have great faults, and we great excellencies, there is much to be said still on both sides. Let us at present agree to differ.

In the next place, show your Protestantism in your family and in your domestic habits. I noticed on one Sabbath-day last year in Paris,

much as that holy day is degraded, how much of the domestic element appeared, even in its desecration. I rarely saw a Frenchman taking a promenade to the Champs Elysées, or to the gardens of the Tuilleries, or the Boulevards, without leading by the hand, or carrying his child on his shoulder. They seemed in this respect to be the most domestic of all people. So far it was beautiful, and not unworthy of imitation. Do not you, then, go to the Crystal Palace, and leave your children behind you. Take such of your children as can understand the spectacle; and show, that if our Christianity makes us reverence the Sabbath-day, it makes us also love our children. Our Queen has set a noble example; for in the splendid spectacle, consecrated by the prayers of the chief minister of religion, so lately witnessed, she had her children by her side, to temper by the quiet beauty of the mother the impressive splendours of the Queen.

In the next place, avoid even the appearance of excess in drinking. We have a very equivocal character abroad in this respect. Perhaps our taxes help to make it so. At all events, I never saw a foreigner intoxicated, during the many weeks I have spent in Paris or Belgium. I know they have other sins: but this is no just reason why we should retain

the one we have. Be temperate, without being teetotal. Let not the Italian, the Frenchman, and the Spaniard, and the inhabitants of the East, go home and say: These Anglo-Saxons are furious against a Roman Cardinal, but they are most indulgent toward French alcohol. Avoid the very appearance of this evil.

And lastly, show your deep reverence for the Sabbath-day. This is a special duty for the day. Alas! alas! the Continent has lost its Sabbaths, and gained the poor substitute of saints' days in their stead! It has lost the pearl of days, and has only the gewgaws called the day of the Immaculate Conception,—the day of the Assumption,—and other days of the same questionable value. It has parted, in its folly, with the Lord's holy day, and it has got, as its reward, the saints' holidays, and their whole character suffers by the exchange. I gather from their remarks, that they have an idea that they will never be able to get over an English Sabbath; of course, much less a Scotch Sabbath. They think it a most melancholy day. Nevertheless, I hope and believe that the very gates of the Crystal Palace are shut on this day. It will strike the foreigner more than anything to see the places of amusement shut on Sunday. They think they will feel dull and dreary on the Sabbath; so melancholy is

their conception of it, and so full of depressing influence do they believe it to be. Let us show that the Sabbath is a bright day. Put on your brightest looks and robes. Do not regard the Sabbath as a day of funereal gloom, but a festival day; show that it is the most joyful day in all the week; that you feel a pleasure in listening to the minister's sermons, and a joy in praying and praising, that make the rest of the days of the week sad in comparison with that day. Realize the following sweet lines of Herbert on the Sabbath:—

“ O day most calm, most bright,
The fruit of this, the next world's bud,
The indorsement of supreme delight,
Writ by a friend, and with his blood ;
The couch of time ; care's balm and bay ;
The week were dark, but for thy light :

Thy torch doth show the way.

“ The other days and thou
Make up one man ; whose face thou art,
Knocking at heaven with thy brow ;
The working-days are the back part ;
The burden of the week lies there,
Making the whole to stoop and bow,
Till thy release appear.

“ Man had straight forward gone
To endless death ; but thou dost pull
And turn us round to look on One,
Whom, if we were not very dull,
We could not choose but look on still ;
Since there is no place so alone

The which He doth not fill.

“ Sundays the pillars are,
On which heaven's palace arched lies :

The other days fill up the spare
 And hollow room with vanities.
 They are the fruitful beds and borders
 In God's rich garden: that is bare
 Which parts their ranks and orders.

"The Sundays of man's life,
 Threaded together on Time's string,
 Make bracelets to adorn the wife
 Of the eternal glorious King.
 On Sunday Heaven's gate stands ope;
 Blessings are plentiful and rife,
 More plentiful than hope.

"This day my Saviour rose,
 And did enclose this light for his:
 That, as each beast his manger knows,
 Man might not of his fodder miss.
 Christ hath took in this piece of ground,
 And made a garden there for those
 Who want herbs for their wound.

"The rest of our Creation
 Our great Redeemer did remove
 With the same shake, which at his passion
 Did the earth and all things with it move.
 As Samson bore the doors away,
 Christ's hands, though nail'd, wrought our salvation,
 And did unhinge that day.

"The brightness of that day
 We sullied by our foul offence:
 Wherefore that robe we cast away,
 Having a new at His expense,
 Whose drops of blood paid the full price
 That was required to make us gay,
 And fit for Paradise.

"Thou art a day of mirth:
 And where the week-days trail on ground,
 Thy flight is higher, as thy birth;
 O let me take thee at the bound,
 Leaping with thee from seven to seven,
 Till that we both, being toss'd from earth,
 Fly hand in hand to heaven!"

Such is the bright, and beautiful, and Scriptural idea of the Christian Sabbath. And now, my dear friends, let the great assemblage we have witnessed during the week that is past, remind us of a great assemblage that will yet come. You know that I have told you that I take a bright view of this gathering; and I am justified up to the present in all that has passed. But the day will come when the King will sit upon his Throne, and all nations shall be gathered unto Him. Now we may pray, now we may gather blessings, now we may be made happy; but then there will be no change of character, then all will be settled. One dread division will on that day cry out to the hills to hide them, and to the rocks to cover them; and another division will sing what was sung by anticipation at the opening of the Crystal Palace, but which will then be fulfilled, when prophecy is carried out, and promise is performance—"Hallelujah, Hallelujah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth: the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever."

CHAPTER II.

ANTICIPATION AND CONTRAST.

“ And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of

God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."

REV. xxi. 18—xxii. 5.

SCENES that are developing themselves around us have suggested my reading and study of the exquisite imagery which I have now read in your hearing. I have examined these words, "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us;" *i.e.* make us a truly Christian people, that, in the language of the Psalmist, "thy ways may be known upon the earth, and thy saving health among the crowds of nations from the ends of the earth that are gathered together in this great city."

The very perusal of the picture I have read, suggests, by way of contrast, the evanescence of all that is an approximation to it. Man tries to imitate the heavenly, but his brightest and most beautiful approximation is only the more splendid failure. Whatever man attempts upon the earth, however great, when he achieves it, is only an evidence that he has yearnings in his soul after a perfection, a.

beauty, a glory which this world cannot furnish ; yet every one of these yearnings are Divine instincts—indomitable instincts, not to be disappointed or denied, but to be gratified when the New Jerusalem shall come down from heaven, and the splendid picture that is here set in prophecy shall be fulfilled in fact, in history, and in grateful experience.

Earth has been often the scene of great gatherings. Many of these are familiar to us. Sometimes men have come in countless crowds to battle ; sometimes to the Olympic games, and races, and wrestlings ;—one time, familiar to you all, they came as the Crusaders of old, when, under the auspices of a Pope, who was foolish enough to consecrate such folly, and at the instigation of Walter the penniless, and Peter the hermit, who had nothing better to do, they set out to recover the desolate tomb of a dead Christ, instead of going forth to preach the risen glory of a living and interceding Christ. Incidental evils have accompanied all great gatherings, but if there have been incidental evils, as there will be in this great city at this remarkable time, I believe there will be permanent, nay, everlasting good. I do not believe that the evil will anything like counterbalance the good. There are many prophecies of evil ; many auguries of

mischief offered in all shapes from all quarters on the present gathering in this metropolis. I will never gather dead leaves from my garden if I can find beautiful roses ; I will not look on the dark side of the picture, which may not be, but on the bright side, which possibly will be : at all events, I will not anticipate evil ; I will rejoice in expecting good ; and if I am disappointed, I can only then patiently submit. Scepticism has had its conferences, superstition its conclaves, Rome has had her jubilees ; why should not England have an enjoyment, if it be only for a day ? Consecrated it has been ; blessed let us hope it will be ; and instead of prophesying evil, like birds of ill omen, let us rather help on the good that is possible, and avert the evil that is contingent. At present, I need not repeat, this is the greatest and most miscellaneous gathering that has been since the days of Pentecost itself. The tares and the wheat are together ; the gold and the alloy ; the good and the bad ; the frivolous and the serious ; the gay and the grave. Their inner hearts are not more diversified than are their outer costumes and expression of countenance.

That gathering, however, is no accident. I do not believe there is such a thing in all God's universe as accident. Not the fall of

the tiniest ephemeral insect on its wing is an accident, any more than the fall of a monarch from his high throne. All are emissaries, all are missionaries, and great good the issue. Optimism, in my judgment, is the grand guarantee of the gospel of grace. This gathering of the nations is eloquent in lessons to us, and ought to call for serious prayer. It is to you and to me—to the pulpit and to the pew—an opportunity of doing good, the highest good, everlasting good to the souls of mankind.

Every such attempt as that to which I have alluded is, as I have already hinted, an effort of man to reach that perfection which was his first destiny ; and it is a confession upon man's part that he feels the want of something, and that he is anxious, and that he will labour, if possible, to recover it. The most beautiful painting you can look at ; the most finished poem you can read ; the most glorious structure you can contemplate, are all efforts of man to reach a perfection of which he has vague and inextinguishable recollections ; a perfection, too, the very attempt to reach which is a prophecy, and an augury of the fulfilment of God's promise, that this air shall not always resound with the tramp of battle steeds, the rolling of the war drum, and the sound of the clarion, and that this earth shall not always be steeped in tears, and

torn with graves—that sick-beds, and sorrows, and crosses shall not always be; but that one day, and I believe sooner than some imagine, the New Jerusalem will come down from heaven, and the world shall close as the world began,—with Paradise itself.

The prediction which I have read in your hearing from the book of Revelation, describes a descent upon the earth, not an erection upon it. You will perceive in the opening of the 21st chapter, that, in apocalyptic vision, “John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” It did not grow out of the earth like a flower made of the earth’s materials, and destined with the earth to decay, but it comes down from heaven. Its origin is heavenly, its destiny is heavenly; its character is therefore essential and unmixed purity. It comes down, it is said, from heaven, and is planted on the earth, and it shall exhibit a glory the very reading of which is music. When I listen to any one reading these two last chapters of the Apocalypse, it is as if I listened to the sweetest strains of the most majestic oratorio. The thoughts are so magnificent, the language so poetical, that all that Shakspeare wrote, or Milton conceived, sink into insignificance in

comparison with these majestic accents of the son of Zebedee, the fisherman of the lake of Gennesareth. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven," presenting a glory, a magnificence, a splendour without comparison, as it is without companion.

The reading of it suggests contrast. That great structure raised in Hyde Park, beautiful as it is, admired as it is, is nevertheless full of flaws and imperfections. The rains will pierce it; the winds will find crannies to go in at: decay will touch it; it is liable to a thousand contingencies. An earthquake may gulp it down; the hurricane may sweep it away; a single flash of lightning from God's cloud may leave it, and all its glory, a miserable wreck; a disorderly mob (though there is no reason to anticipate that) may break it up: decay will lay its ten thousand wasting fingers upon it by-and-by; and if decay do not, the men that built it will be required to take it down; so that it will have started up to show what man can do, and it will have gone away to tell us that all that man does is evanescent, and that we should look beyond the stars for "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;" a temple in the skies, a fabric that shall not know decay,

that shall endure for ever and ever. The palace I have spoken of is doomed to decay; the palace of the age to come shall last for aye. Ruby rocks will be its foundation; the quarried gems of the earth will be its stones; the very dust that lies upon it will be the dust of diamonds; and all there will be perfect as it will be pure. There will be no element of decay; no hostile power from without; its origin is from above; its Guardian will be Omnipotence; its duration will be eternity!

One cannot pass without asking, Have we any hope of being citizens of that no mean city? Have we any prospect of entering into that palace not made with hands, and of admiring what the nations will bring into it—their glory, their magnificence, and their riches, throned upon which shall be no earthly, though beloved monarch, but the Prince of the kings of the earth, whose crown is an everlasting crown, and whose dominion knoweth no end?

This divine creation, this crystal palace on the earth—and I believe it will be on the earth, for it is said to “come down from God out of heaven,” and “like unto clear glass”—hath no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, as stated in the beautiful chapter from which I have selected my motto. There

will be no obscuring cloud ; there will be no overhanging shadow ; there will be no exhaling mist ; there will be no object on which bright light shall not shine, and no object that will not bear the brightest light to be concentrated on it. Solomon's temple, I believe, is a blot in comparison with this ; and the most magnificent creation of human genius, the concentrated splendour of all the combined cathedrals of England and of Europe, will only be to this great temple of the universe as the tiny light of the lamp is to the sun's, when he shines from his meridian throne.

The palace in Hyde Park was opened the other day by prayer. That was a noble feature. The only sad thought I had about it, some months ago, was, lest it should not be so. On the Continent of Europe, they will not open a railway till the priest comes to bless it ; nor will they start an engine until the Archbishop says a mass for its welfare. And what they do in their superstition, surely we, who have brighter and purer faith, and nobler hopes, ought not to leave undone ; and therefore I am thankful that the edifice was opened with prayer. But this great edifice described in the Apocalypse, will not be opened with prayer, it will be announced with praise. It will be consecrated, not by the

presence of an earthly, but by the glory of a heavenly King; and the hymn that shall be sung at the opening of this palace in the skies will not be a prophetic, but an accomplished halleluia—"The Lord God omnipotent reigneth; and the kingdoms of this world are"—not will be—"become the kingdoms of our God, and of His Christ." "It shall have no need," we are told, "of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." A Sabbath calm shall repose on it perpetually; every acre of it shall be holy, every pulse of every inmate a Sabbath bell, every breath shall be fragrance, all sounds shall be music, all scenes beauty, and this earth shall yet be the holy chancel of that grand temple which is the whole universe of God; and Christ, the High Priest, in the midst of it, shall minister to us, and we serve and praise him without ceasing. Such is a Christian's hope. Not a poet's dream is this, but a Christian's hope, guaranteed by the oath and unfailing promise of our God.

It is added, as a characteristic of this future temple, that "there shall be no night there." Night is used in the Scriptures both in the sense of physical darkness and of moral ignorance, or of both. Now, in that future temple

there shall be no night; no dark pall shall be spread over it: none of its inmates shall be ever compelled to leave it; no bird of night shall hover over it; no haze or mist shall conceal its splendours: the Sun of righteousness himself shall shine upon it; and the sun that shines day by day from his meridian throne, shall be of no more use amid the immediate splendours of the Fountain from which he is filled, than the glow-worm at noon-day, or the farthing candle amid the blaze of the now noon-tide sun. There shall be no night there, in this sense, that there shall be no need for resting. We cannot do without night now. If it were ceaseless day, this frail machine of ours—this wonderful machinery—this strange mysterious engine—this harp with a thousand strings, would be worn out, wasted, and done up. Night comes with its broad cool shadows, and we lie down to get rest for our exhausted limbs, and repose for the over-excited and wrought-up mind; but in that better land, in that great palace not made with hands, we shall never weary examining the glories that the nations bring into it; we shall need no night for the repose of the limbs, or to repair the exhaustion of mind. The body shall be a wing, not a weight to the soul; and on unwearyed pinion, we shall move from space to

space, ever striking out new glories, ever smitten with new admiration, ever giving utterance to new praise, ever magnifying Him who is throned on the riches of all, and to whose glory, and for whose pleasure, all things are and were created. There will also be no night in that better rest, in the sense that there will be no ignorance there. Let any of the uninitiated members of this congregation go into the beautiful creation in Hyde Park, and look upon the exquisite gems from one quarter, the intricate machinery from another, and the textile fabrics from a third, and he will neither understand their meaning, nor history, nor object, nor how and by whom they were originally made. We have but a narrow horizon for our minds to move in; we have but weak eyes to examine, and partial light, or rather, ignorant minds, to bring to bear on the investigation of the subjects submitted to us. And when we walk through this palace, we shall meet with those we do not know, some disposed to plunder us, others willing to help us; most of them men of strange tongues, strange dresses, manners, and habits. But when we shall meet in the palace that shall glow in the splendours of an unsetting Sun, all there shall speak their own tongues, but they

shall be to our ears only as different dialects of the same catholic tongue. We shall all praise the same God, and we shall be able each to say "Amen" to the praise of all. And those costumes which are now so various, shall all be exchanged for robes white and clean, washed in the blood of the Lamb; arrayed in which, we shall hold palms of victory in our hands :—the mother meeting the babe she lost in infancy; the friend recognizing in the resurrection features the long-severed friend; circles broken up on earth, meeting again, and all made happy in the affection of each other, because all are happy in the presence of God and of the Lamb. "There shall be no night there."

Again: it is predicted that the gates of it shall not be shut. There will be no thieves to keep without; and there will be no chance of plunder within. No police force will watch that city that hath foundations; no possibility of what is dishonourable or dishonest can be there. But shut gates does not mean defence, or merely not being open for admission. The expression is a classical phrase: "Shut gates" was a declaration of war, and "Open gates" a technical phrase, that proclaimed the existence of peace. And when it is here said that "the gates of it shall not be shut," it simply means

that there shall be no warfare, but perfect, perpetual, and pervading peace. How sadly does this contrast with what we now see ! Our present festival of nations, beautiful as it is, is yet kept amid battalions of soldiers. What a significant symptom that the era of peace is not come ! And men that walk with olive branches in their hands, know that the barracks are charged with soldiers, lest the very possibility of war might occur to disturb a peace which is conventional, not real ; temporary, and by truce, not perpetual, and never to be disturbed. The greatest peace that exists in Europe at the present moment is a peace made up by compact : nations have not gone to rest, they are only bivouacked ; they are ready each for the battle again. Who does not know that in Europe every man stands with his hand on his sword-hilt, or with a lighted match by the cannon or great gun, ready for a battle which looms in the distance, the havoc and issue of which no statesman can calculate ? All things show that the era and age of peace, real peace, lasting peace, peace passing understanding, is in the future, not here. The gates are still open : the soldier is still a reality : war is still a possibility : but the true way to put an end to war, and to make the army obsolete, is not, as some most foolishly imagine, to refuse the

supplies to the Secretary-at-War, but to give men something better to do, something nobler to think upon. You can drive out a bad passion only by bringing a good one to bear on it; and, after all, if bad men were kept from war, they would only enter into something more mischievous. It is only in and from the truths of this Book (the Bible) that permanent, real peace can be given to the human heart. "Great peace have they that keep Thy law."

But it is further added that there shall be no curse there. It seems severe language to employ, but however severe it may seem, it is true that we are all born under the curse. This is our state by nature: the world was cursed when man sinned: the instant that man lost his innocence, creation lost its beauty, its harmony, and its blessing. And that curse is to be seen by an inquisitive mind on every product that shall be exposed as the glory of the earth in the wonderful structure to which I have alluded. There is not a rare or beautiful product of the forge; there is not an exquisite web or lace wrought with the greatest elaboration of the fingers of skill, that has not, in the history of its manufacture, tears, aching fingers, bowed-down backs, ay, and sickness, and famine, and consumption, and death!

Little do we think, as we contemplate the beautiful creations of skill, how many heads have ached, and how many graves have been opened, whilst these were being manufactured, for the weary and worn-out creators of them all! It needs this to temper our excessive idolatry of these things. The curse rests upon the earth; it rests upon man that walks it; it rests upon all that man does. But in that better state there will be no curse. True, its glory is the purchase of blood, but that blood was shed eighteen hundred years ago, and the agony of Him that shed it was ended when he cried aloud, "It is finished;" and the recollection of the price of glory will not make us mourn, but cause us to praise the love of Him who shed his blood to restore forfeited paradise to man, and lost happiness to the human heart.

It is also added that there shall be no more death: *i. e.* decay, disease, waste, wear, or tear. Blessed prophecy! "There shall be no more death." The most beautiful fabrics that you can examine in the Exposition of all Nations, are decaying while you are looking at them. There is rust on the purest gold; there is tarnish on the brightest steel; there is a worm in the loftiest cedar; there is moth in the fairest and most costly robes.

And if one looks to the history of the past, death shows that he has been the great agent in the era of that history. The purple of Tyre, and the cunning hands that made it, are all gone; the Phœnician weavers and the artisans of Memphis are all passed away, and nothing but their name is left; the products of the looms of Sidon, and the creations of the workshops of Tyre and Nineveh, have all disappeared, and nothing but the mere memorial remains; the skill, the secrets, and the creations of the artisans that Cambyses brought captives into his country, and whose factories filled the whole valley of the Euphrates, from Nineveh to Persepolis, have all perished from the earth; the glory of illustrious Venice is gone; the blades of Toledo and of Damascus have ceased to command the admiration of the world; the carved work of Verbruggen, and the lace and embroidery of Brussels and Valenciennes, are fading. Death, decomposition, decay, are carrying on their processes in the Crystal Palace, while you are expressing to your neighbour the admiration that you feel as you view these wonderful structures. Death rides on the railway, walks amid the glories of the nations, breathes on the brightest, gathers the fairest: graves are his footprints, decay is his work, and dis-

pearance from the earth and forgottenness the experience of all. But in that better rest there shall be no death. Its fairest things will not be its fleetest; its brightest things shall be its longest. Death shall wither no flower there: he shall not still one bounding heart; he shall not leave or show any traces of his presence. There shall be no spider to weave his web amid the branches, or caterpillar to gnaw the leaves, of the tree of life; there shall be no interruption of that river of life which makes glad the city of our God, nor one element of sin, decay, death, sorrow, or tears in that New Jerusalem which cometh down from heaven.

It is further added, that "the nations of them that are saved shall bring their glory into it." "The nations of them that are saved," is the characteristic of those that shall be inmates of that better rest. The present great assemblage of the nations cannot be called an assemblage of the nations that are saved: would to God it really could be called so! They are met, it is true, not for battle, but in peace; and one regards this as a contribution towards permanent and lasting peace. But they are the nations, we fear, of some that live in scepticism, of others immersed in superstition, and of others that have no creed, or conscience, or

faith, or hope, or holiness of any sort at all. There is wheat, but we fear there will also be many tares. Turk, and Greek, and Syrian, and Russian, from the east; English, Irish, Scotch, German, Portuguese, French, from the west, meet together, not on the ground of a common faith, but on the ground that we can applaud—of a common brotherhood, sympathising with the beautiful which God has made us to admire, and with the useful that God has made us to employ. And so far we rejoice at it. But if one could open the inner chambers of imagery, and look upon that heaving mass that rolled like a mighty torrent through the streets of London on the 1st of May, and could analyse every motive, object, thought, feeling, imagination, that were to be found there, alas! shall I be thought uncharitable if I fear, that, if God looked down, He must have seen, in a vast proportion of it, what He saw in the antediluvians of old, “that the imaginations of man’s heart was only evil, and that continually”? But the worse they are, the more need have they to be prayed for; the more needful it is that they should see a beautiful example in us: and he who feels their moral and spiritual condition the saddest, is just the man who will set before them the example of whatsoever things

are just, and beautiful, and true, and who will contribute most liberally to provide means for their spiritual instruction, regeneration, and amelioration. But these nations of them that are saved, shall bring their glory into this new palace. At present, the glory of the nations is not true glory ; but then the chief glory of the nations will be that which is indeed their glory. Lyons and St. Etienne are bringing their glory, namely, their silks ; Bohemia brings its glory—its glass ; Brussels and Valenciennes bring what they think their glory—their lace ; Prussia is bringing its pottery ; Italy, its beautiful mosaics ; Algiers, its arms ; and America—interesting peculiarity !—is bringing in a ship of war the trophies and the monuments of peace. Each nation brings what it thinks its glory, and perhaps that glory is a foretaste of the true glory that shall be. Is that sixtieth chapter of Isaiah a poet's dream ? Is it a mere transcendental prediction ? I believe that these glories, these literal glories, will be in that future state. I do not believe there is anything in a beautiful flower inherently evil ; or that there is any iniquity in a brilliant gem ; or that there is anything of God's curse inseparable from a beautiful diamond. All this earth wants is, not to have its

matter annihilated, or transformed into something airy, visionary, spiritualized ; but to have sin, and its corrosive poison, entirely and utterly purged from it, and to have the consecrating footsteps of the King of kings upon its bosom, and then its deserts shall rejoice, and its solitary places shall blossom as the rose.

While the nations are bringing into this palace made with hands, what they think their glory, and what in its place is beautiful enough, let us try to bring a more excellent glory—not our bullets, and swords, and muskets from Birmingham; not our cottons from Manchester; not our pottery from Staffordshire; not our silks from Spitalfields—though in these things that nation that has the noblest religion, the open Bible—that has none it fears, and none to gain whose favour it would sacrifice truth—will bear its products to be compared with those of any nation in the world, and will carry off the palm too; thus demonstrating to all mankind that the nation that has the grace of God in its heart, shows the greatest cunning in its fingers, and the greatest skill in its artisans. Righteousness exalteth a nation in all its relations and in all its productions. But still we have something better wherein to glory. Those beautiful isles in the

South Sea that the London Missionary Society has been instrumental in bringing to Christ—those enduring gems are worthy to be placed in the Crystal Palace, and fit to be compared with that magnificent diamond which is the admiration, the envy, the wonder of Asia and Europe. Those Hindoos whom our Missions have been instrumental in bringing to Christ are our gems and our diamonds; our Bible, our Missionary Societies, our City Missions, our Tract Societies,—these are rich fabrics; these are the true glories of Old England, which, alas! alas! France, and Spain, and Germany, and Asia, and China, and India are not yet prepared to appreciate. These would be very dull specimens to them; they would have no significance, because Christ has no beauty that the unpurged eye should desire Him, and no comeliness that the unsanctified heart can admire. It needs the regenerated heart to appreciate the trophies of grace; such hearts will one day be everywhere. A day does come when all shall be truly regenerated, and shall admire and appreciate that as the greatest glory which reflects the image and bears the superscription of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.
Such, then, is a brief contrast between the palace that occupies the newspapers, the

thought, the conversation of the country; and that better and brighter one which shall occupy the admiration of angels, the thoughts and hearts of a redeemed and glorified universe.

I may state here what I have stated before, that I have received from I know not how many quarters letters asking me, because I have turned some attention to the subject of prophecy, whether I did not regard the late gathering in London as only a repetition of Belshazzar's feast? I cannot see the least point of coincidence—any point of contact or comparison whatever; and if you will read the fifth chapter of Daniel, which describes the feast of Belshazzar, and the gathering of the nobles of his kingdom to worship gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, and then take the ordinary daily newspaper, and read the account of the opening of the Crystal Palace, adorned by the presence of our beloved Queen, consecrated by the prayers of the chief minister of religion, a minister who deserves all the dignity he holds, and whose beautiful and Christian character is the admiration of all denominations; you will see that between the festival of the first of May, and the feast of Belshazzar, there is abundant point of contrast, but not one single point of contact or comparison. Some still more

credulous, and more mistaken too, have asked whether I really did not suppose the present gathering was like the Armageddon gathering of the last days, when God shall come down to punish the mighty multitude for worshipping gods of silver and gold, and for their ignorance and forgetfulness of Him? I try to understand such prophecy as God gives a clue to its interpretation; but when one racks one's fancy for points of coincidence, twist's God's Word, and dreams and suggests all sorts of grotesque and ridiculous applications, you only give the Roman Catholic a new reason for shutting the Bible which you thus abuse, and the infidel a new argument for disbelieving the Bible which you thus misapply and pervert.

I confess that I am more disposed to look upon the bright side of the scene. I view it as an instalment of the grand result, as an evidence of man's craving of what is to be, and a hint dropped from the skies, that if man can create so fair, and exquisite, and beautiful a thing by his skill, how beautiful, how bright, how glorious will that palace be not made with hands; and how truly may we lift our affections from the glories that so soon will crumble, the beauty that so soon will fade, and set them upon that house eternal in the heavens—that city that hath foundations—that

apocalypse of beauty; that panorama of grandeur—"the new Jerusalem, coming from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

I hail the occurrence as an augury of good. I hail it as a means under God of helping onward the victory, the triumph, and the reign of peace. England, America, France, Austria, Spain, have so often met upon the battle-field; so often have brothers drenched the earth with the blood of brothers, that surely that man's heart is not instinct with the noblest feelings of humanity who does not hail a rivalry not of blood—who does not regard with delight a battle-field upon which is heard no sound of clarion or war drum; on which are seen no "garments rolled in blood," or any of the accompaniments of battle; but where intellect meets intellect, and it is tried, by intellectual weapons and intellectual strength, which nation is greatest in art, in science, in literature, and in civilization. And, O blessed triumph! if it shall come out that this Old England of ours, this Great Britain of ours, whose faith is menaced by the Pope, because it is not pure, whose faith is despised by others, because it is too sceptical, shall be the nation that is great in arms, great in science, great in the arts, great in literature, because, what is greater

than all, great in the knowledge and the love of God; in sympathy with man; in all that elevates, ennobles, and adorns the character of mankind.

I look upon it, in the next place, as a great contribution to benefit the condition of our countrymen at large. I do not believe that the result of it will be evil: I hope it will contribute to make the poor man's home more airy, cleanly, and comfortable. I am one of those who believe that many things which ought to be done, may be done politically, socially, morally. That tax which keeps out the light and air from human dwellings, I believe to have been one of the conductors of cholera, and now a great source of the excessive drunkenness that prevails. Make the poor man's house comfortable and clean, and he will love it. It is not teetotalism that will prevent drunkenness; it is giving the drunkard such means of enjoyment at home that he will not be driven from his home to the gin-shop; otherwise, all your panaceas for arresting his drunkenness will be utterly worthless. What we need in these matters is a little attention to the poor. And depend upon it, the grand palaces of England would not shine less splendid, if they did not cast their shadows on such dark lanes and alleys as are often to be found behind

them. Where there is such magnificence and splendour, there ought to be corresponding munificence of charity for those beside them. I regard this, then, as a contribution to the real temporal welfare of the country. Our blessed Lord never overlooked that. While He ministered to the soul, and died for the soul, He showed that He wished that man should be happy and healthy in his temporal condition on earth. I have the strongest and highest hopes about this country of ours. And if, indeed, at the Reformation this kingdom was the tenth that separated from the Popedom, it is not said anywhere that it rejoined it. Often as she has sinned, grievously as she has tampered with duty (and the presence she now deplores as an aggression is God's punishment for thus tampering with Popery; for, whenever nations sin, God weaves their punishment out of that which was their sin); but still, as I have said, we have no evidence in prophecy that this tenth kingdom ever joined the remaining nine, and if so, it does not come under their curse. And if it does not come under their curse, it may be reserved for this beautiful gem of ours upon the bosom of the vast ocean, to be the land in which freedom will find its firmest footing, humanity its enthusiastic champion, and

religion its lasting and most enduring altar. All things lead me to this conclusion. I will not augur evil while there are so many omens of bright and blessed results.

My dear friends, money can admit you to the Crystal Palace, but it has no currency beyond the present. Your title to that house not made with hands, to that city that hath foundations, is not what the Bank of England or the Queen of England can give. The Bank of England can make a rich man ; the Queen of England can make a Duke : but God alone can make a Christian. And that title of which the whole Bible is full—the righteousness of God our Saviour—is the only thing you can present that will admit you into that “house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” I ask you, my dear friends, Have you it ? If, standing in Piccadilly, and looking on the vast crowds that will rush past day after day to see the glories the nations bring into that palace of glass, I were to ask any person, “Who are these, and whence came they ?” I should be answered, “These are French, Germans, Chinese, Austrians, Indians, that have come from west and east, and north and south,” and that would be all ; “and each has a ticket of admission.” But when that grand group shall stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb—that mighty multitude

composed of all nations, and kindreds, and tribes, and tongues ; and when it shall be asked by some of the inquiring angels, struck by the sight of these immigrants and colonists who are not natives — for angels alone are natives — and startled by the beauty, and glory, and magnificence of that mighty crowd — “Who are these, and whence came they ?” the answer shall not be, “These are French, Germans, Spaniards, Chinese, or Turks ;” nor shall it be, “These are Churchmen, or Dissenters ; Scotch Churchmen, English Churchmen, Free Church, or some other Church :” but it will be said, as if to pour contempt upon our paltry distinctions, “These are they that have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb ; therefore are they in that palace, and stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb ; and serve Him day and night without ceasing.”

Christ is the way to that glory ; His righteousness the title to it ; His blood the price of it. We are none of these. And what is a Church ? Simply, simply, a signal-post telling you, “This is the way, walk ye in it.” It is not one whit easier to get to heaven by the gallery-stairs of St. Paul’s, than it is by the penitential stairs of St. Peter’s at Rome. The Church is not the way to heaven, but a witness

to the way ; that 's all. The minister is not the way to heaven, any more than a policeman is the way to the Crystal Palace ; he merely tells you the way. The only course by which the Church can rise to her true glory is when she stands in the humblest position, and puts herself forward, not as taking Christ's place, but as witnessing to Christ's claims, and telling men, in plain language, " This is the way, walk ye in it."

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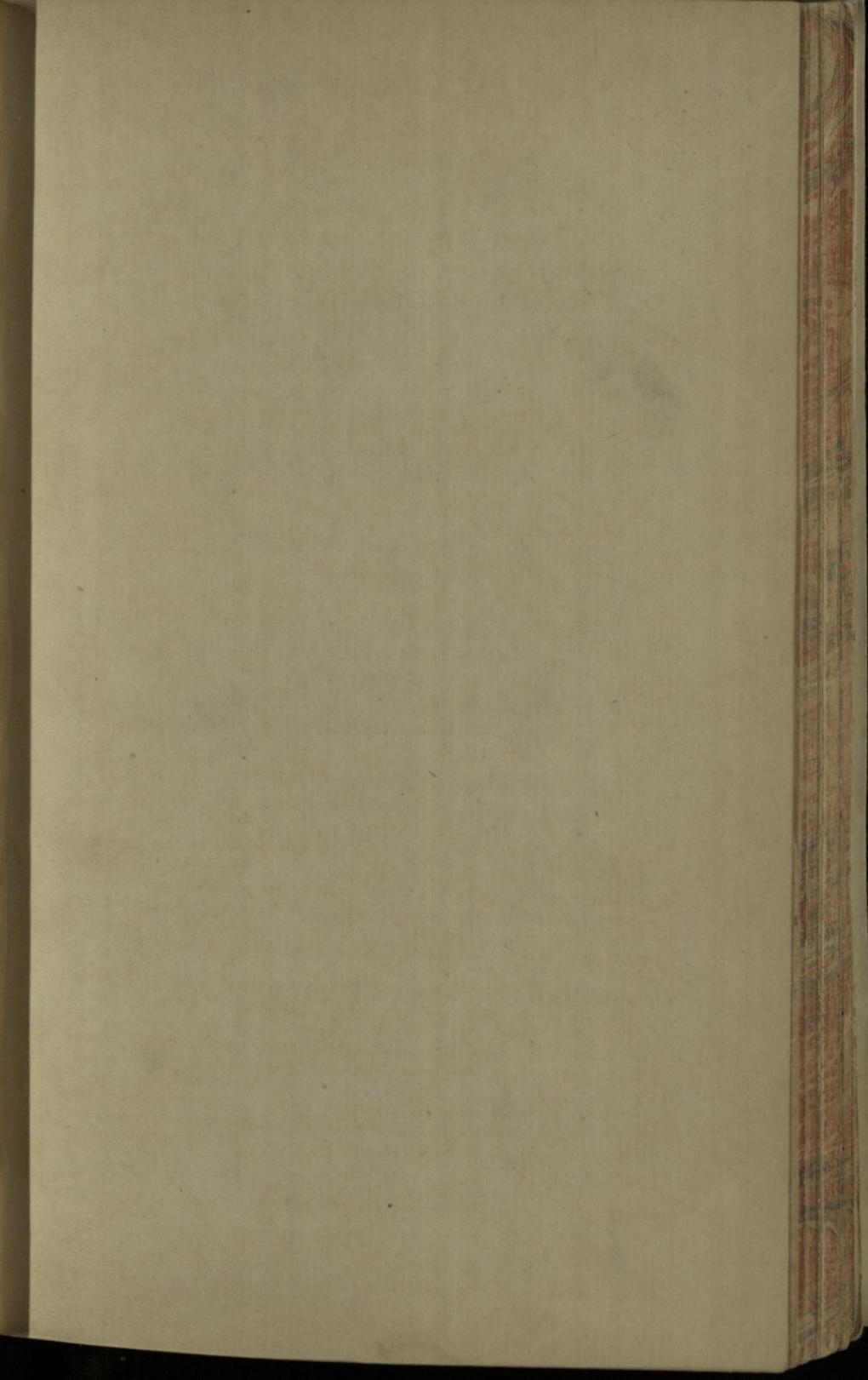
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